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taking a comprehensive view of the state of education in Ireland, and the necessity of a reform in the management of the funds allotted to it; and contrasting the little good done by the large funds in Ireland, with the great advantages accruing from the well managed and economical plan of parish schools in Scotland.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

ON the authority of the Gentleman's Almanack, for the year 1789, I took the number of parishes in Ireland at 2293, and stated the sum requisite accordingly at 120,000*l.* and allowing this variation between the old and new Almanacks to arise from the former, considering every *united* parish as one, and the latter as two or three, my original calculation will be still correct. But even granting the incorrectness of the old, and the correctness of the new Almanacks, taking the number of parishes at 2436, and allowing the visitors one pound for each school, actually visited, still would the sum of 130,000*l.* be fully adequate to meet all the expenses of this great national object....*the civil and moral instruction of the people of Ireland.* I thank Quinctius for the above correction and for his well-timed hint in regard to charter-schools. The sum of 30,000*l.* procured by melting down the charter-schools, &c. into this scheme, not to mention the useless waste of the public money on endowed schools, would reduce the sum requisite to be levied off the nation for this great national purpose, to 100,000*l.* In one of his calculations he has, however, misunderstood my plan: he has added the expense of building to the first year's endowment, whereas my plan devotes the first year's endowment to the building, and the first year's visitation to the establishing of the various schools, which were to commence the year following, and to be afterwards conducted without any interruption or confusion.

I must also differ with Quinctius in the sum requisite for building the school-houses. Many of these are already built in convenient situations, and in this case, the first year's endowment is sufficient for the house, and permanent establishment of a master. And the sale of those that are not in centrical situations, will contribute largely with the government grant to the establishment of scool-houses in more convenient situations. The parochial grant is made discretionary, that it may depend on the abilities and public spirit of each parish, how much will be added to the *needful* grant of government for the comfortable support of the establishment. The preference of a married to a single man as a teacher, will of course strike every parochial committee as providing for the education of more scholars, and particularly of females, on the most effectual and most natural plan.

Quinctius will see that I confine the masters to the recommendation of *Christian morals*, contained in the scriptures, leaving the peculiar doctrines to their respective spiritual guides And this liberty without licentiousness I consider one of the excellencies of the plan.

Another excellence, I had almost said perfection, of my plan is, that it prevents as much as possible the inroads of influence, corruption, and *sinecureism* in every department. The teacher's abilities, conduct, and exertions, are kept in constant check by at least three of a judicious parochial committee; that committee's attention, as well as that of the masters, by the county visitor, and the attention of the visitors, parochial committees, and masters, by the minuteness of the visitor's report to the supreme committee, by a sense of duty, and the paternal regard to be evinced in their annual report to the public. Their suggested improvements would again descend through the Established, Dissenting, and Catholic clergy to the visitors, the parochial committees, the masters, the parents, and the children. Thus would the ascending and descending report resemble the exhalations attracted from the grosser dregs of earth, that after passing through the great alembic of the atmosphere, and distilling their refined essence on the drooping herbage, continue the same incessant round of still renewing life to the produce of parent earth.

As to the triple stem of places and sinecures, I cannot suppose Quinctius

serious, since he virtually acknowledges, that it is as well fenced as possible against corruption and partiality. Against corruption, since the holding of every place in the system depends upon *constant* individual exertion, and since every district's endowment for any year depends upon the attention of the parochial committee that year. And against partiality, since the three churches are properly *balanced* and *united* in the grand object. I am much gratified by the approbation manifested by your Correspondent, signed G. and by the arguments adduced in affirmance of the necessity of a radical reform in the education of the people. This I have particular reason to expect, from a distinguished member of the House of Commons. SIMPLEX.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

ESSAY ON PRINTING.

GENTLEMEN,

AS the history and nature of *Stereotype* printing is not generally understood, I beg leave to trouble you with a few observations on that subject. I have borrowed my information from the best authorities; and with a view of rendering my short essay more complete, I have also given an abstract of whatever appeared to me most interesting on the subject of printing in general. Should you consider it adapted to the objects of your useful Miscellany, your insertion of it will oblige, A.Z.

It is probable that we are indebted for the valuable art of printing to the Chinese. At least it is certain, that it was practised in China, long before it was known in Europe. Some European traveller might have perceived the improvement, and introduced it into the Western world. It is singular that the Romans did not practise printing, as they appear to have been really in possession of the art. They used stereotypes for stamping their pottery; and it is really surprizing, that they should not have thought of extending the art to literary productions.

Three towns of Europe claim the honour of the invention of printing; Haerlem, Strasburg, and Mentz.

It is generally allowed, however, that Guttemberg was the inventor of the art of printing with moveable types, that he commenced at Strasburg and perfected the art at Mentz.—The names of the other candidates for this honour are, John Faust, of Mentz; John Mental, of Strasburg, and L. John Koster, of Haerlem.—When Mentz was taken by Adolphus, in 1462, the printers of that city were involved in the general loss and sufferings which their townsmen experienced; and dispersing with a view of bettering their fortunes, the art of printing was thus diffused over Europe.

When it was first established at Paris, a memorial was presented by the copiers of that city, praying the parliament to consider how materially their business was injured by the printers, and to grant them redress. That tribunal infected with the superstition of the times, conceived the printers to be conjurers, and had proceeded to seize and confiscate their property, had they not been prevented by Louis XI. who, notwithstanding his bad qualities, was the friend and patron of literature.

The art of printing was practised at Rome so early as the year 1467, and soon after in England, under the auspices of Bourchier, archbishop of Canterbury. That prelate sent out W. Turner, master of the robes, and W. Caxton, merchant, to the Continent, to learn the art. These ingenious gentlemen met with one Corseilles, an underworkman, whom they prevailed upon, by handsome presents, and large promises, to come over to England and instruct them in the art. Immediately a press was set up at Oxford, which was afterwards removed to St. Albans, and to Westminster Abbey. Another account states, that Caxton was sent in 1464, by Edward IV. to negociate a commercial treaty with the Duke of Burgundy, and that he learned the art of printing, during his residence on the Continent. It is certain, that though a merchant, he possessed a literary taste, and his first work was a translation from a French historical miscellany.

The tradition of the devil, and Dr. Faustus, originated from the peculiar